19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

766 contingents of Fashoda began to come in and marched around the outskirts of the village. The various performances carried out by each group did not vary to any appreciable extent except perhaps in the order. The main events recorded were :-

[411 703] The warriors, (Note 6) with shields, spears and sticks, entered the arena regimented with remarkable discipline into their sections. They first marched round the outside of the village, sometimes kneeling down as a body and beating their shields with their spears. They then moved in procession round the drums, turned to face them and [535] danced with a jumping motion in a circle round them, with their spears raised. They then turned to the tomb of the late *reth* and, mingling with the women who were standing outside and singing the songs of [644] Fafiti, knelt in homage towards him, sometimes beating their shields and clapping hands in time to the drums. The word *wuo*, the traditional form of opening a conversation with the *reth*, was repeated by all at certain points in the song. They then arose and advanced round the village, once more visiting the houses of the late *reth* in turn, some of them peering inside the doors as if seeking for him. They then marched outside the village, and another contingent of warriors entered to take their turn.

766 781 Twice during the day, there was a spontaneous panic, and the crowds fled shrieking from the village. The explanation given was that the spirit of the late *reth* had been brought back by Nyikang and was now in their midst. Hands were clapped to drive the spirit away. The attitude of the Shilluk to this supposed phenomenon is important. There is no doubt that they were seized with fear, and fled as if the devil were behind them, but it was also regarded as a joke, and they all laughed heartily immediately afterwards. This mixture of fear and laughter is also characteristic of their flight from the effigy of Dak, which is described later. The panic was not started by any particular signal except that on both occasions someone heard somebody say "Nyikang has appeared."

The ceremonial dancing performed by the warriors and others, and the panic at the arrival of the departed spirit were repeated without